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AUG 13 1986

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U.S. CUSTOMS

UNITED STATES

FOR VISITORS (nonresidents)

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welcome
to the United States!

I'm glad that you're taking this opportunity to discover America, or, for those of you have been here before, to explore more of our land. America has always welcomed travelers, both those coming for a day and those planning to stay a lifetime. The majestic Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor symbolizes our commitment to open borders for all those willing to live within our laws and contribute to making America a better place.

Americans are a patriotic people, but we also value the heritages of which other nations are justly proud. Most of our citizens can trace their roots back to some foreign land, so the tradition of hospitality is still very strong among us. I'm sure that wherever you go, you will find Americans eager to extend a friendly welcome, to hear about your country, and to tell you about ours. They want your stay to be a pleasant one, so that when you go back to your own country, it will be with a clearer understanding of the ideals of liberty and justice on which our nation was founded.

May your stay be an enjoyable one and the prelude to many more visits to America.

Ronald Reagan

your declaration

Customs declarations—form 6059B—are distributed on vessels and planes and are available in the following languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Polish, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean. Fill out your declaration well in advance of arrival in order to expedite your Customs/Immigration clearance. You must write in the information requested on the front side of the declaration. You need not itemize in writing articles brought with you if they are within the exemptions afforded arriving nonresidents. You will declare these articles orally at the time of your Customs inspection. The flight attendant or steward should be able to advise you if a written declaration is required.

Persons arriving via our land borders will make an oral declaration if all the articles brought with them are within the exemptions allowed.

Written Declaration

In making a written declaration, everything brought with you must be listed with its price or value. This includes gifts for other persons, articles carried for another person, articles for sale, and commercial samples. You do not list wearing apparel, articles of personal adornment, toilet articles, and similar personal effects owned by you abroad and intended for your own use.

The purchase price of articles may be given in the currency of the country of purchase. If you don't know the price, say so. If the article was a gift, state the fair value in the country where it was acquired. Misinformation can result in delays and penalties.

Articles imported in excess of your exemption are subject to applicable duty and tax. The Customs

inspector may reduce the value of a dutiable article which has been used or worn.

Family Declaration

The head of a family may make a joint declaration for all members residing in the same household and traveling together to the United States.

your exemptions

In clearing U.S. Customs, a traveler is considered either a "returning resident of the United States" or a "nonresident." Nonresident status also applies to:

- persons emigrating to the United States;
- children born abroad who have never resided in the United States; and
- persons who left the United States upon abandoning their residence with the intention not to reestablish U.S. residency.

U.S. residents stationed or working abroad may also claim nonresident status when returning to the U.S. for a short visit, provided all articles, except for gifts and items consumed during their visit, are exported upon departure from the U.S.

Articles brought into the United States are subject to applicable duty and internal revenue tax unless they are prohibited entry, but as a visitor or nonresident you are allowed certain exemptions and privileges.

Personal Effects

Wearing apparel, jewelry, toilet articles, hunting and fishing equipment, and similar personal effects are exempt from duty if appropriate for your personal use and owned by you and in your possession before coming to the United States.

Any jewelry or similar articles of personal adornment valued at $300 or more passed free of duty under your personal customs exemption cannot be sold within 3 years unless duty is paid to a District Director of Customs. The duty must be paid before the sale is completed or the articles become subject to seizure.

Alcoholic Beverages

Adult nonresidents may bring in, free of duty and internal revenue tax, not more than one liter of alcoholic beverages—beer, wine, liquor—for personal use. Quantities in excess of the one-liter limitation are subject to duty and internal revenue tax. However, only those quantities of alcoholic beverages permitted by the laws of the state in which you arrive can be released to you. These laws vary from state to state and in some cases are more restrictive as to the amount of liquor an individual may bring into the state than the amount which may be imported into the United States.

Shipping of alcoholic beverages by mail is prohibited by United States postal laws.

Cigars and Cigarettes

You may include in your personal exemption not more than 200 cigarettes (one carton), 50 cigars, or 2 kilograms of smoking tobacco, or proportionate amounts of each. An additional quantity of 100 cigars may be brought in under your gift exemption.

Vehicles

You may import an automobile, trailer, airplane, motorcycle, boat, or similar vehicle for the transportation of yourself, your family, and your guests, whether you arrive for a temporary or indefinite stay.

The vehicle must be imported in connection with your arrival and be owned by you or on order prior to your departure.

Should you sell your vehicle within one year after its importation into the U.S. and it is of foreign manufacture, duty must be paid to the U.S. Customs office most convenient to you before the sale is completed. However, a vehicle not complying with the Federal laws discussed below cannot be sold in the United States.

The law governing motor vehicle safety applies to all automobiles manufactured after 1967. Another Federal law requires that vehicles, beginning with the 1968 model year, and motorcycles manufactured after December 31, 1977, meet air pollution control stand-

ards. An exemption to these standards has been made for nonresident visitors to the United States, provided that the vehicle is imported for a period of one year or less for personal use. Vehicles imported by nonresidents emigrating to the United States must meet both the safety standards and air pollution control standards.

If you plan to import a car, obtain a copy of our pamphlet, *Importing a Car.*

Household Effects

You may import furniture, carpets, dishes, linens, libraries, pictures, and similar household furnishings free of duty. The articles must have been either available for your use for at least one year or used in a household where you were a resident member for one year. The year of use need not be continuous nor does it need to be the year immediately preceding the date of importation.

Household effects meeting the above requirements may be entered within a 10-year period after your last arrival in the United States from the country where the effects were used abroad.

Antiques are free of duty if produced 100 years prior to date of entry. If they are not part of your personal or household effects, you should have proof or evidence of antiquity.

Household effects may not be entered under your duty-free exemption if they are for another person or for sale.

Professional Equipment

A person emigrating to the United States may enter free of duty professional equipment which was owned and used abroad; for example, professional books and tools of trade, occupation, or employment. Theatrical scenery, properties, or apparel and articles for use in any manufacturing establishment are not considered professional equipment.

Every effort has been made to indicate essential requirements; however, all regulations of Customs and other agencies cannot be covered in full and regulations and requirements are subject to change.

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gifts

Gift Exemption

A nonresident may claim, as free of duty and internal revenue tax, articles up to $100 in value for use as gifts for other persons, if you will remain in the United States for at least 72 hours and the gifts accompany you. This $100 gift exemption or any part of it can be claimed only once every 6 months. You may include 100 cigars within this gift exemption. Alcoholic beverages may not be included in the gift exemption.

Do not have your articles gift-wrapped, as they must be available for customs inspection.

If you are not entitled to the $100 gift exemption, you may bring in articles up to $25 in value free of duty for your personal or household use. You may include any of the following: 50 cigarettes, 10 cigars, 150 milliliters of alcoholic beverages, or 150 milliliters of alcoholic perfume or proportionate amounts. If any of these limitations are exceeded or if the total value of all dutiable articles exceeds $25, no exemption can be applied.

Articles bought in "duty-free" shops in foreign countries are subject to U.S. Customs duty and restrictions but may be included in your exemption.

Wedding Gifts

No specific exemption from customs duty is allowed a nonresident for wedding gifts. A U.S. resident going to another country to be married to a person of that country (and the couple plans to return to the United States to reside) may bring back free of duty wedding gifts sent from the United States if they can be identified as the same gifts that were sent. If a returning resident is entitled to the personal exemption of $400 (or $800 if returning from the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or Guam), part or all of it may be applied to gifts not of United States origin.

Gifts Sent by Mail

Persons in the United States may receive a gift mailed from a foreign country free of duty, if the shipment does not exceed $50 based on retail value or $100 if sent from the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or Guam. You may send as many gifts as you wish, but the addressee in the United States will be required to pay duty if gift parcels received in one day total more than $50 (or $100). Gifts which exceed these amounts will be subject to customs duty based on the entire value. There is no $50 (or $100) deduction.

Packages should be marked "Unsolicited Gift," with the name of the donor, nature of the gift, and fair retail value of the package clearly written on the outside wrapper.

Perfumes containing alcohol, alcoholic beverages, cigars, and cigarettes may not be included within this gift privilege.

Gift packages sent from a foreign country should not be declared by you to Customs on your arrival in the United States.

other articles: free of duty or dutiable

In Transit

A nonresident in transit through the United States may have dutiable articles not exceeding $200 in value, including not more than 4 liters of alcoholic beverages, released to him by a Customs officer without payment of duties if the articles will be taken by the nonresident to a place outside the Customs territory of the United States.

On some airlines, checked baggage in transit through the United States by air may be left in the custody of the arriving airline if the passenger so elects. The airline will then forward the baggage directly to the port of departure. Such baggage need not be examined but may not be claimed by the owner while in the United States without first being delivered to a Customs officer for examination. You should ask your airline if this service is available before your departure to the United States.

Articles Free of Duty Under GSP

Under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences certain items from beneficiary developing countries have been designated as eligible for duty-free treatment. An advisory list of the most popular tourist items which have been accorded GSP status may be obtained from U.S. Customs.

Articles Subject to Duty

Articles imported which cannot be claimed under the exemptions allowed are subject to applicable duty and tax. After deducting your exemptions and the value of any articles duty free, a flat rate of duty will be applied to the next $600 worth (fair retail value) of merchandise. Any dollar amount of an article or articles over $600 will be dutiable at various rates of duty.

Articles to which the flat rate of duty is applied must be for your personal use or for use as gifts. You cannot receive this flat rate provision more than once every 30 days, excluding the day of your last arrival.

The flat rate of duty is 10% based on fair retail value in country of acquisition including Communist countries, and articles must accompany you.

The flat rate of duty is 5% for articles acquired in the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, or Guam, whether the articles accompany you or are shipped directly from these islands into the U.S. There are certain procedures to follow, however, for goods shipped in order to qualify under this provision.

Members of a family residing in one household traveling together to the United States will group articles for application of the flat duty rate without regard as to which member of the family may be the owner of the articles.

Shipping Hints

Personal and household effects entitled to free entry need not accompany you to the United States. You may have them shipped to yourself at a later time if it is more convenient.

A shipment of personal and/or household effects arriving in the United States must be cleared through Customs at the first port of arrival, unless arrangements have been made with the freight forwarder abroad to

have the articles sent in Customs custody (in-bond) from the port of arrival to another Customs port of entry closer to you for clearance.

You are required to execute Customs form 3299, Declaration for Free Entry of Unaccompanied Articles, for presentation to the examining Customs officer when the shipment is cleared through Customs. This form for free entry of these articles is not valid until you arrive in the United States.

It is not necessary to employ a customhouse broker to clear your shipment through Customs. You may do this yourself after you arrive in the United States or you may designate a relative or friend to represent you in Customs matters. You would have to furnish your representative a letter, addressed to "Officer in Charge of Customs," authorizing that individual to represent you as your agent on a one-time basis in the Customs clearance of your shipment.

All shipments must be cleared through Customs within 5 working days after arrival in the United States. If a shipment is not cleared within that time, it is sent to a warehouse for storage at your risk and expense until Customs clearance can be made.

prohibited and restricted articles

Because Customs inspectors are stationed at ports of entry and along our land and sea borders, they are often called upon to enforce laws and requirements of other U.S. Government agencies. The importation of certain classes of merchandise is prohibited or restricted to protect community health, to preserve domestic plant and animal life, and for other reasons.

Merchandise that is prohibited from entry into the United States will be seized and you may be liable for a

personal penalty. Merchandise that is restricted will be released after inspection by the agency which imposed the restrictions, or detained until the conditions attached to the restrictions are met. You will be given a receipt for any articles detained by Customs.

Among articles prohibited are absinthe, liquor-filled candy, lottery tickets, narcotics and dangerous drugs, obscene articles and publications, seditious and treasonable materials, hazardous articles (e.g., fireworks, dangerous toys, toxic or poisonous substances), products made by convicts or forced labor, and switchblade knives (except for use by a one-armed traveler).

Biological Materials

Biological materials of public health or veterinary importance (disease organisms and vectors for research and educational purposes) require import permits. Write to the Foreign Quarantine Program, U.S. Public Health Service, Center for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333, U.S.A.

Books

"Piratical" copies of copyrighted books—those produced without the authorization of the copyright owner—are prohibited. These include unauthorized photo-offset copies of American bestsellers and expensive textbooks produced and sold in the Far East for a fraction of what their cost would be if produced in the United States.

Cultural Property

An export certificate may be required by certain Latin American countries in order to import pre-Columbian monumental and architectural sculpture or murals, whether they are shipped directly or indirectly from the country of origin into the United States.

Firearms and Ammunition

Firearms and ammunition intended for legitimate hunting or lawful sporting purposes may be brought into the United States, provided the firearms and any remaining unfired ammunition are taken out of the United States by you upon your departure.

All other firearms and ammunition are subject to restrictions and import permits. For complete information, write: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Department of the Treasury, Washington, D.C. 20226, U.S.A.

Food Products

Bakery items and all cured cheeses are admissible. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service leaflet, *Traveler's Tips,* provides detailed information on bringing food, plant, and animal products into this country. Imported foods are also subject to requirements of the Food and Drug Administration.

Fruits, Vegetables, Plants

Many fruits, vegetables, plants, cuttings, seeds, unprocessed plant products, and certain endangered plant species are either prohibited from entering the country or require an import permit. Endangered or threatened species of plants and plant products, if not prohibited from being imported, will require an export permit from the country of origin. Every single plant, plant product, fruit, or vegetable must be declared to the Customs officer and must be presented for inspection no matter how free of pests it appears to be. Most canned or processed items are admissible.

Applications for import permits or requests for information should be addressed to Quarantines, USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Federal Bldg., Hyattsville, MD 20782, U.S.A.

Meats, Livestock, Poultry

Meats, livestock, poultry and their by-products (such as sausage, pâté), are either prohibited or restricted from entering the United States, depending on the animal disease condition in the country of origin. Fresh meat is generally prohibited from most countries. Canned meat is permitted if the inspector can determine that it is commercially canned, cooked in the container, hermetically sealed, and can be kept without refrigeration. Other canned, cured, or dried meat is severely restricted from most countries.

All prohibited importations will be seized and destroyed unless the importer returns them immediately to their country of origin.

You should contact Quarantines, USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Federal Bldg., Hyattsville, MD 20782, U.S.A., for detailed requirements.

Medicine/Narcotics

Narcotics and dangerous drugs are prohibited entry and there are severe penalties if imported.

A traveler requiring medicines containing habit-forming drugs or narcotics (e.g., cough medicine,

diuretics, heart drugs, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, depressants, stimulants, etc.) should:

- have all drugs, medicine, and similar products properly identified;
- carry only the quantity that might normally be used by an individual having a health problem requiring such drugs or medicine;
- have either a prescription or written statement from your personal physician that the medicine is being used under a doctor's direction and is necessary for your physical well-being while traveling.

Merchandise Controlled

Merchandise originating in Libya, Nicaragua, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Cuba (and all goods containing Cuban components) are prohibited from being imported without a Treasury license under the Foreign Assets Control Regulations. Licenses are strictly controlled and for all practical purposes may be considered unavailable to tourists.

Foreign visitors, however, are permitted to bring articles of Cuban origin in their baggage if not in commercial quantities or for sale.

Any questions should be addressed to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, Washington, D.C. 20220, U.S.A.

Money

There is no limitation in terms of total amount of monetary instruments which may be brought into or taken out of the United States nor is it illegal to do so. However, if you transport or cause to be transported (including by mail or other means), more than $10,000 in monetary instruments on any occasion into or out of the United States, or if you receive more than that amount, you must file a report (Customs form 4790) with U.S. Customs (Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act, 31 U.S.C. 1101, et. seq.). Failure to comply can result in civil and criminal penalties. Monetary insturments include U.S. or foreign coin, currency, traveler's checks, money orders, and negotiable instruments or investment securities in bearer form.

Pets

There are controls, restrictions, and prohibitions on entry of animals, birds, turtles, wildlife, and endangered species. Cats and dogs must be free of evidence of

diseases communicable to man. Vaccination against rabies is not required for cats or dogs arriving from rabies-free countries. Personally owned pet birds may be entered (limit of two if of the Psittacine family), but APHIS and Public Health Service requirements must be met, including quarantine at any APHIS facility at specified locations, at the owner's expense. Advance reservations are required. Monkeys or any nonhuman primates may not be imported. If you plan to bring your pet with you, obtain a copy of our leaflet, *Pets, Wildlife, U.S. Customs.*

Trademarked Articles

Foreign-made trademarked articles may be limited as to the quantity which may be brought into the United States if the registered trademark has been recorded by an American trademark owner with U.S. Customs.

The types of articles usually of interest to travelers are 1) lenses, cameras, binoculars, optical goods; 2) tape recorders, musical instruments; 3) jewelry, precious metalware; 4) perfumery; 5) watches, clocks.

Persons arriving in the United States with a trademarked article are allowed an exemption, usually one article of a type bearing a protected trademark. An exempted trademarked article must accompany you and you can claim this exemption for the same type of article only once each 30 days. The article must be for your personal use and not for sale. If an exempted article is sold within one year following importation, the article or its value is subject to forfeiture.

If the trademark owner allows a quantity in excess of the above exemption for its particular trademarked article, the total of those trademarked articles authorized may be entered.

Consents for popular tourist articles are contained in Customs' leaflet, *Trademark Information for Travelers.*

Wildlife and Fish

Wildlife and fish are subject to certain import and export restrictions, prohibitions, permits or certificates, and quarantine requirements. This includes:

- wild birds, mammals including marine mammals, reptiles, crustaceans, fish, and mollusks;
- any part or product, such as skins, feathers eggs; and
- products and articles manufactured from wildlife and fish.

Endangered species of wildlife and products made from them are prohibited from being imported or exported.

If you contemplate importing articles made from wildlife, such as tortoise shell jewelry, leather goods, articles made from whalebone, ivory, skins, or furs, please contact, prior to your departure to the United States, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, U.S.A.

Federal regulations do not authorize the importation of any wildlife or fish into any state of the United States if the state's laws or regulations are more restrictive than any applicable Federal treatment. Wild mammals or birds, taken, killed, sold, possessed, or exported to the United States in violation of any foreign laws are not allowed entry into the United States.

o U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1986 623-132/468

Department of the Treasury
U.S. Customs Service
Washington, D.C. 20229
Revised 1986

Publication No. 511